



JOHN A. ROEBLING,

A. D. 1869.









E. Amer. N.Y.

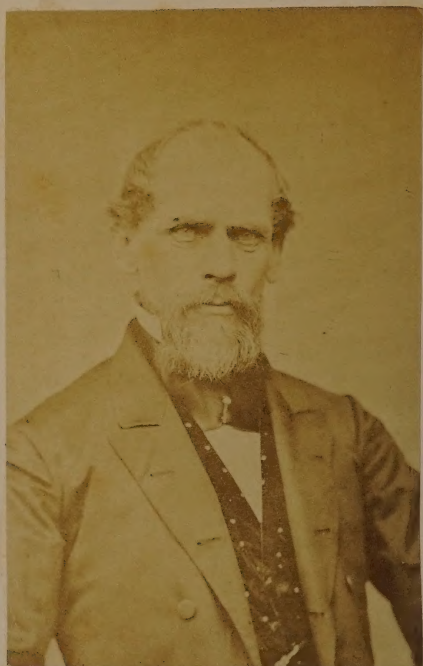
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JOHN KILHAM.











**In Memoriam.**

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**JOHN A. ROEBLING.**

**BORN JUNE 12, 1806.**

**DIED JULY 22, 1869.**

***AGED 63 YEARS.***



## FUNERAL SERVICES.

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Sunday, July 25th, 1869, being the day appointed for the performance of the burial services over the remains of our beloved fellow-citizen, JOHN A. ROEBLING, Esq., multitudes came to attend the funeral, and look for the last time upon one, whom all respected and honored. The body of the deceased was placed in the south room of the family mansion, being deposited in a casket of solid rose-wood, lined with white satin. Upon the coffin various wreaths of flowers were placed; on the table, near the remains, was a beautiful cross and crown of tube roses. The plate on the inside of the lid bore the following inscription:

JOHN AUGUSTUS ROEBLING,

DIED

JULY 22, 1869,

AGED

63 YEARS AND 1 MONTH.

The countenance of the deceased was natural and life-like. It had three things impressively written upon it—*uprightness, benevolence, and peace.*

The hour of service appointed was two in the afternoon, but the thousands pressing in to gaze once more upon the familiar features, prevented the commencement of the funeral rites until after three P. M. The Rev. Mr. Gardner offered up a fervent



and appropriate prayer in the German language, followed by an address from Rev. John Hall, D.D., after which the procession formed, and consisted of the following clergymen :

Rev. Mr. Passavant, of Pittsburgh.

Rev. John Hall, D.D., of 1st Pres. Church, Trenton.

Rev. G. F. Gardner, of the German Lutheran Church.

Rev. Albert U. Stanley, of Trinity Epis. Church.

Rev. John C. Brown, of St. Paul's Epis. Church.

The Pall Bearers were—

Hon. Henry C. Murphy,	Col. Julius W. Adams,
Hon. Horatio Allen,	Hon. Andrew H. Green,
Charles Hewitt, Esq.,	Timothy Abbott, Esq.,
Samuel K. Wilson, Esq.,	Alfred S. Livingston, Esq.

Following the remains were the family and immediate relatives in carriages.

The Mayor and Council of the city of Trenton.

The Board of Trade of the city of Trenton.

The workmen from Roebling's wire mill.

Several Companies of the Fire Department, and citizens, with many from other cities. The procession, nearly a mile in length, passed through Broad, Greene and State streets to the Mercer Cemetery. Here the solemn and beautiful service for the dead, in the Episcopal Liturgy, was read by the Rev. Albert U. Stanley and the Rev. John C. Brown, and the mortal remains of John A. Roebling were committed to the bosom of mother earth, "ashes to ashes, dust to dust," awaiting the peal of the last trumpet, and the resurrection morn.

# SKETCH OF THE LIFE AND WORKS

OF

## JOHN A. ROEBLING.

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Mr. JOHN A. ROEBLING, a native of Prussia, born June 12th, 1806, in the city of Mulhausen, in Thuringia. He received the usual academic instruction, and after a course of study in the Royal Polytechnic School at Berlin, he graduated with the degree of Civil Engineer. It is noteworthy that so early in his career as these college days he began to give study to the question of suspension bridges, and made them the subject of his graduating thesis. His degree from the Royal School required him to serve three years in the service of the State, and these he spent mostly in the superintendence of public works in Westphalia. Shortly after the close of this service, he emigrated, at the age of twenty-five, to this country, and settled in the State of Pennsylvania, which his genius was to do much to make prosperous and prominent in manufactures and trade. His home was made near Pittsburgh, where the Monongahela and Alleghany unite to form the Ohio. This region was then almost the frontier of the advancing population of the United States. Mr. Roebling bought a tract of wild lands, and set himself with much vigor and persistence to reducing

them to tillable condition, and to building up about him a village of frontiersmen. About this time, the energies of what were until recently the "Middle States," were turned to the aim of improving transportation by a system of canals and slack water navigation on the rivers. In this work Mr. Roebling first engaged as an engineer in America. His first engagement was on the Beaver river, a tributary of the Ohio; and he was subsequently connected with an enterprise for uniting the Ohio river with Lake Erie, by what was known as the Sandy and Beaver canal, an enterprise which failed before the rising popularity of steam railways. He next entered the employment of the State, located a feeder for the Pennsylvania Canal, on the Upper Alleghany, and then was engaged in surveying and locating routes for what is now the Pennsylvania Central route across the Alleghany Mountains, from Harrisburgh to Pittsburgh, the work being commenced by the State.

At this point in his career, Mr. Roebling, with a rich experience in the ordinary departments of his profession, and a recognized reputation as an accurate, able, and original engineer, made in his occupation in life, which was to mark it decidedly thenceforth, and which brought him more boldly into view in connection with the great growth of intercommunication in our country than any other single man, unless it be the discoverer of steam or the inventor of its application to land and water transportation. He engaged in the manufacture of iron wire, a business which he has never yet abandoned, and in



which he acquired that unequalled knowledge of the nature, capabilities, and requirements in the use of wire which has enabled him to revolutionize the building of bridges. It was twenty-five years ago that Mr. Roebling first applied wire to the support of weights which had been before entrusted only to stone piers or arches; and the boldness with which he made the application is characteristic of the man. The problem before him was to erect a wooden aqueduct for the Pennsylvania canal across the Alleghany river, in the period of nine months, including the winter of 1844-45. Mr. Roebling took the contract, as the lowest bidder, and proposed to carry across a wooden trunk to hold the water, supported by a continuous wire cable, seven inches in diameter, on each side. The proposition was unusually ridiculed by the profession, who prophesied that it would only need that the water should be turned into it to effect the instant and disastrous ruin of the structure. Mr. Roebling *knew* differently. Within the specified time, in spite of the rigors of the winter and the complicated difficulties encountered in the novelty of the machinery by which his cables were made in place, Mr. Roebling completed successfully the task allotted. About the same time, or soon after, Mr. Roebling built the Monongahela bridge across the river of that name at Pittsburgh. It is erected on the piers of a former structure and consists of eight spans of 188 feet each, supported by two four-and-a-half inch cables; a peculiarity of the bridge is the pendulum principle applied to counter-balance adjoining spans under the action of unequal

loads. The bridge cost \$54,000 only, and is still a stable and permanent structure, being more used now than ever before.

In 1848, three years after the construction of the Pittsburgh aqueduct, Mr. Roebling carried on the erection of four similar works on the line of the Delaware and Hudson canal, connecting the great anthracite coal region with the tide waters of the Hudson river. They were as follows:

Lackawaxen aqueduct—2 spans, 115 feet each, and 27-inch cables.

Delaware aqueduct—4 spans, 134 feet each, and 28-inch cables.

High Falls aqueduct—1 span, 134 feet, 8½ inch cable.

Neversink aqueduct—1 span, 170 feet, 9½ inch cable.

All are permanent works, and require only the replacement of the wooden portions as they wear out.

Mr. Roebling, who had now removed his works, and established them and his residence at Trenton, New Jersey, was called on to undertake the first of the series of great bridges with which his name became subsequently so intimately connected. For a long time the need had been felt of bridging the chasm of the Niagara river, to connect the Central Railroad of New York and the Great Western Railway of Canada, a purpose that could only be accomplished by what was at that time a complete novelty—a railway suspension bridge. In 1851, Mr. Roebling undertook the task, working at it uninterrupt-

edly for four years, in spite of the fearful Canada cold, until, in March, 1855, the first locomotive and train passed. This remains to this day, so far as we now recall, the only example of its kind—*i. e.*, of a railroad suspension bridge of any magnitude. The bridge has a clear span of 825 feet, and is supported by four wire cables of ten inches in diameter. It has two floors, the upper one for railway tracks, and the lower for ordinary vehicles and foot passengers; these two rods are connected by struts and diagonal tension rods, so that the superstructure of the bridge forms, in fact, a continuous hollow girder, stiff enough to support the action of a rolling load, the weight, however, being supported by the cables.

About the same time, Mr. Roebling undertook a railway suspension bridge across the Kentucky, on the line of the Southern Railroad, leading from Cincinnati to Chattanooga, which, if it had been completed, would have been more important than the Niagara bridge, the Kentucky at this point being wider and deeper than the former river, and requiring a clear span of 1224 feet.

The towers of the bridge were erected, the anchorages completed, most of the wire and other material was delivered, when the railroad company collapsed.

Mr. Roebling's next most important work, and, with the exception of the Alleghany bridge, at Pittsburgh, his only remaining important work, was the Cincinnati bridge.

This connects two cities, two States, and was meant, at the time of its inauguration, to make the



link between the free and slave territory in the United States. It lies between Cincinnati, on the northern side of the Ohio, and Covington, on the southern side. The idea of its erection originated with a few enterprising men in the smaller town, who raised some \$300,000 towards its completion. This was in 1856, and work was commenced and carried to the completion of the towers to the level of the floorway. Then the crash of '57 gave a check, which was not overcome for five years. In 1862, in the gloom and depression of the war, these brave western cities again took up the great task, and carried steadily forward to completion the only public work then performed by private capital in the Union. In December, 1866, the bridge was opened for foot-passengers, and in January, 1867, for trains and vehicles.

The bridge is 1005 feet clear span from the outer edges of the towers, and 1619 feet between the abutments or anchorages. The floor is 103 feet above low water mark in the centre, and 91 feet at the towers. The roadway is twenty feet wide, and the sidewalks seven feet each. The roadway is traversed lengthwise through its centre by two wrought iron girders, one eighteen inches deep, the other nine inches deep, together making a combined girder of twenty-eight inches in depth. At each side of the roadway is a truss ten feet deep, thus giving great stiffness and strength to the arch itself. The flooring is suspended by two wire cables 12 1-3 inches in diameter, which pass over the towers and are anchored firmly in the abutments. This is, in

brief, a description of the construction of the bridge, of which further details would not interest or inform the average reader. Mr. Roebling regarded it as a perfect structure, not only the best yet attained in any country, but erected on a principle which never can be superseded.

The only bridge of Mr. Roebling's it remains to refer to is that over the Alleghany, at Pittsburgh, which is suspended on three towers in two spans.

The last great work on which Mr. Roebling was engaged was the East River Bridge, a project more magnificent in its dimensions, and more important in its certain influence on the prosperity of the vast population in and near New York, than anything of the kind ever before undertaken in this country. Mr. Roebling's plans for this great undertaking exhibit the same boldness in scope, the same solid confidence in the splendid ability that had never failed him, that were shown in the first suspension aqueduct at Pittsburgh, the first railway suspension bridge at Niagara, and the greater undertaking over the Kentucky. It is sufficient to say that his reputation, world-wide as it may in all moderation be said to have been, sustained the gigantic project before the people, and carried it to the success which has thus far attended it. It is certain that in the last ordeal to which the plans were submitted, the inspection of the Government Commissioners—most accomplished and competent, as well as conscientious officers—Mr. Roebling's name was all-powerful.

## ACTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE NEW YORK BRIDGE COMPANY.

BROOKLYN, July 24th, 1869.

The Board of Directors of the New York Bridge Company met at noon to-day, at the office of the Brooklyn Gas Light Company, to take into consideration the death of the engineer of the Bridge, Mr. JOHN A. ROEBLING.

Hon. H. C. Murphy presided, and Isaac Van Anden was elected Secretary.

The Chairman moved, seconded by Mayor Kalbflesch, the adoption of the following resolutions :

*Resolved*, 1. This Board receives the death of JOHN A. ROEBLING, Esq., with the deepest concern and sorrow. Connected with him officially for a considerable period, we had learned to appreciate his unsurpassed merits as an engineer and advisor in our work, and to admire his eminent genius and virtues as a man. In all the qualities which exalt human nature he deserved and had won our unqualified confidence and esteem. Regarding his death as a great loss, we bow with humble submission to the inscrutable ways of an all-wise Providence in taking him from us in the midst of usefulness and labors.

*Resolved*, 2. We sincerely condole with his wife and family in the dispensation now dealt to them, in the loss of a husband, father, and friend, and tender them our sincere sympathy and consolation in their affliction.

*Resolved*, 3. As a tribute of respect to Mr. Roebling's memory, the members of this Board will attend his funeral at Trenton to-morrow.

The resolutions were adopted unanimously. Adjourned.

I. VAN ANDEN, *Sec'y*.



## ACTION OF THE BOARD OF TRADE OF THE CITY OF TRENTON, N. J.

At a meeting of the Board of Trade of the city of Trenton, N. J., the following Preamble and Resolutions were adopted in respect to the memory of Mr. Roebling:

Whereas, the melancholy tidings have reached the members of this Board, that their President, JOHN A. ROEBLING, has departed this life in consequence of an injury accidentally received while superintending an important work of civil engineering in the city of Brooklyn, they have met together for the purpose of giving expression of their feelings in regard to this most sad event, which has at once deprived a worthy and estimable family of a most excellent and affectionate husband and parent, and a community of a most valuable citizen;

And whereas, the deceased has been for many years a prominent and respected citizen of this vicinity, always among the first to promote every useful enterprise, and always ready to aid liberally in all the public and private charities without ostentation or display; therefore be it

*Resolved*, That the Board of Trade of the city of Trenton deplores with profound sorrow his unexpected and untimely death, and while bearing testimony to the integrity of character which has been so conspicuously displayed by the deceased in a long and active life, and to the charitableness of his disposition, by which his purse was freely opened, not only for the support of public charities, but also for the relief of private indigence, hereby tenders to his wife and family, and the community of which he was a useful member, its heartfelt condolence for their unfortunate bereavement.

*Resolved*, That the Board would hereby acknowledge the services rendered to it by the deceased in its organization, and subsequently as its President, and recommends the Executive Committee to adopt such suitable symbols of mourning in the rooms of the Board as they may deem proper.

*Resolved*, That a copy of these resolutions be engrossed at length in the minutes of the Board, published in the city papers, and copies sent to the family of the deceased, by the Secretary.

*Resolved*, That the members of the Board of Trade attend the funeral in a body.

## DR. HALL'S REMARKS.

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DR. HALL spoke in substance as follows :

This is not the time to speak at large of the character and services of the deceased as a public man. The daily press has already furnished a sketch of his interesting history, from his birth and education in Europe to his career after adopting our country as his home. Of that career the best monuments are found in what his genius and skill accomplished—first in the canals, railways and aqueducts of Pennsylvania, and then more conspicuously in the great specialty of his talents, the suspension bridges over the Niagara and the Ohio, and it may well be added, the complete plans for one that is to connect New York with Long Island. These great works tell of the intellectual and practical engineer, and the scientific manufacturer of the materials of which his works are constructed. But here, in his home, in this host of sad and many weeping faces, we find the memorials of another and a higher character ; one that was built up silently, with no demonstration of what was going on except the good that was done and the example that was set. Here are the

witnesses of his integrity, liberality and benevolence. Here are those who were the almoners of his bounty to orphans' and widows' institutions, by annual appropriations of an amount that of itself secured their efficiency. These bands of workmen—coming not alone, but with their wives and children—testify that they knew him, not only in the workshops or by the pay-roll, but as the friend of their families. Here is the lesson which men of capital and employers are summoned by Providence this day to learn, to admire and to practise. This scene is a touching rebuke, in corroboration of what all true social science teaches, to those who look upon the laboring classes as only so much machinery from which they may obtain as much work with as little cost as possible. *This* man was the friend, as well as the employer of his people, and they knew they could at any time appeal to him as such. I am glad to have the opportunity of making these remarks in the hearing of the numerous representatives of the wealth and enterprise of the American metropolis, who have done themselves, as well as their deceased coadjutor, honor in coming to his burial.

And they, and all of us, have another lesson to lay to heart from this scene; and in presenting it I am supported by his own authority; for it was his belief, and reiterated by him within a few weeks, that the Divine Providence is never superseded by what is commonly called chance, whether in disaster or success. Whatever place circumstances may have in the immediate cause of our friend's decease, the light in which we are bound to regard it for our own

instruction is this: That lifeless body was but lately the very seat of intelligence, energy and expectation; he was in the act of beginning the greatest work of his life; he was, at the very moment of his fall, searching for the right spot to lay the first stone of the structure that was to crown his honorable ambition, and to reward the immense intellectual application of years; and just at that moment—at the humble, unobserved point of its beginning, and not at the celebration of its perfection—the trivial incident took place which resulted as we see. “Man dieth, and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?” What befel Roebling may befall us. The lesson is not to discourage enterprise, to write folly on our great undertakings, or to condemn the application of our minds and hands to works that we may not live to complete, but it is to make us feel, as I believe *he* felt, that we and all our projects, our capacities, our existence, are in the hands of God—God the good, the wise, the merciful, as well as the Omnipotent, and that we are not acting according to our true position and best interests, unless we recognize this fact in practice, as well as in theory. We are responsible to Him for our principles and our conduct, in the daily business of our lives. He has given us His law and gospel, His written word and Incarnate Son, for our instruction and direction; and it is only as we live in accordance with this fixed system of truth, that we are faithful men. Those who knew Mr. Roebling well, feel assured that the reason why, in the midst of prevailing corruption of morals in regard to public and pri-



vate transactions, he held fast his integrity above all suspicion, was not merely that he had what is known as common honesty, but that which is produced by a manly, Christian fear of God. It is death that at once terminates our work on earth, and carries us to meet its retribution ; and the sudden, violent end of this man's course, safe, as we trust it was for him, is the admonition to each one of us to be ready for our great account at the most unexpected moment.

And I should not speak so hopefully, if not confidently, of his example in this respect, if I had not the best testimony that, concurrently with the scientific and mechanical subjects which occupied his thoughts and studies, it was a habit of his mind to meditate upon the subject of practical religion. That he could, would and did find time for such investigations, is another of the suggestions which the occasion brings to us. To all of us here present, whether our occupations be more intellectual or manual, whether we belong to one class or another of the workers in busy life, the lesson comes home that no amount or kind of employment can excuse us for neglecting the inquiries that pertain to our souls, their duties and salvation. Except that of the Lord Jesus Christ, "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." He is "the way, the truth and the life ; no man cometh unto the Father but by Him ;" and He is accessible to every penitent, believing and obedient one, without the necessity of any other mediation, whether in the persons of men, or in any organization of men, whether called priests or church. At

the cross of this Redeemer—at the throne of this Intercessor—each one of us may find all we need, if through his Spirit, we bring a broken and a contrite heart, and follow him as our Lord and Teacher, as well as Saviour.

As a husband, father and friend, this circle of relatives await no testimony from strangers; and no words of ours can comfort them now so well as their knowledge of his character, and the remembrance of his affection and fidelity. It is but a few weeks\* since some of us witnessed in this mansion the genial position he held in his family, as we were present with him at the marriage of a daughter. But painful as is the contrast of the two assemblages, there was a character in *that* which gives tenderness to the emotions of *this*. It was a strong, fatherly heart that was then rejoicing in the happiness of those he most loved—it is such a heart they do now and will ever remember. Only let them all honor his memory and example in the way which they know would be most pleasing to him—by receiving this affliction as a Divine intimation that the first and the last end of being is to have our life hid with Christ in God.

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\*June 3, 1869.

# SERMON.

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PREACHED BY REV. J. C. BROWN, AT ST. PAUL'S CHURCH,  
SUNDAY, AUGUST 8TH.

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He being dead yet speaketh.—HEBREWS, xi—4.

Standing as I do to-day, within sight of the earthly mansion, and surrounded on all sides by those who were intimately acquainted with the worth and virtues of him whose departure from us to the better land is so universally deplored, I feel it both a privilege and a duty to testify before you this day, to the memory of one so greatly beloved, and have chosen the words of the text as eminently suitable to this solemn occasion.

The text, brethren, is applicable to every member of the human family, when removed from the scenes of earth. Whatever may have been his position in society, high or low, rich or poor, learned or unlearned, gifted by talent or undistinguished from the mass of his fellow men, we know that when the "silver cord is loosed, and the golden bowl broken," man's influence for weal or woe still continues, and an effect goes forth, shaping the current of many a future event—"He being dead yet speaketh."

But the power with which this voice comes to us, varies with the character, the position and the influence, which the departed may have occupied. The lives of some are like the sea anemone, their bodies confined to one spot they pass the day in waiting for the coming and returning tide, that leaves them ever the same. They speak to us of days misspent, opportunities for usefulness neglected. They leave the world no better and perhaps no worse for their having lived upon it. But there are others who have mapped out for themselves a new path; whose works shall be their monuments for countless generations to come; whose name shall be blessed and held in memory by the widow and the orphan, as well as by the lover of his fellow man, and the devotee of science.

Such an event has just happened in our midst. A great and good man has fallen, and it will be long before another shall rise up and take his place in this community, or fill the position he occupied in the engineering and scientific world.

“He being dead, yet speaketh.”

1st, I would notice the industry and application of the departed as worthy of our imitation. Few men rise to positions of eminence by natural gifts alone. Genius itself can never exert continuous power, without study—intense study. What to us seems easy and simple, graceful and beautiful, has been the labored creation of the brain; requiring sleepless nights, weary days and months of toil. You may gaze in admiration at the graceful structure that, seen from Niagara’s brink, seems in the dim



distance like a fairy bridge suspended on threads of gossamer. But stand upon it, hear the panting of the locomotive above you, and the rumbling of the heavily laden train, and you will, in faint measure, begin to realize the study, labor and toil, by which alone that mighty chasm was bridged over, and made safe as the solid earth.

You intuitively appreciate the many years of close application necessary to the developement of the mighty plan, and the skill and patient toil required for its completion. But few men have the commanding genius for the inception and successful prosecution of so great a work.

Such a man was John A. Roebling. His position in his native land gave him all the advantages of an early education of the highest kind.

His studies as an engineer, while young, laid the basis of his after life of diligence and greatness; and so, up to the close of life; whether in the wilds of Pennsylvania, in the crowded city, or in the quiet of his home, he was still found active and diligent in business, whether public or private, never at a loss; in every emergency wisely suggesting counsel and advice.

There is here a lesson for all, especially the young. You cannot fill a commanding position in the world as a mechanic, engineer, scholar, or statesman, without long, continuous study and application. You have, in the character of him who has gone to his eternal rest, whose fame is world-wide, who had no enemies, and retained all his friends, I say, you have in his character, an

illustrious instance of the WORKING MAN—a man attentive to and diligent in his business, performing his duty, not for selfish gain, nor interest, nor applause, but in order to fulfill his duty and discharge the trusts reposed in him. And hence, he has earned that which is better than sordid wealth, or tinsel honors, or public notoriety. He lives in the respect and affection of every one in this our broad land, who honors honest industry, and appreciates commanding genius. But above all he lives in the hearts of the widow and orphan; and many a tear has been shed by the humble, the sick and afflicted, at the loss of such a friend. Brethren, he is already missed in our community, and the question has more than once been asked, "Who shall supply his place?"

But the second noticeable trait in the character of the deceased, was his patriotism, his loyalty, his true fidelity and love for his adopted country. He was an American citizen, and proud to be called such. In all that concerned the welfare of this great republic he felt a deep interest. True patriotism is a virtue, and ought to be so esteemed by every citizen in the land, whether native or foreign born. Patriotism takes its rise, not in mere love of race, or in bigotry which is blind to faults, and proud of its very blindness; but it originates in a universal love of liberty—which rightly clings to and defends its own honor and best interests, while it wishes peace and prosperity, success and happiness to others. Such was the patriotism of our departed friend. He well knew that the welfare of

the whole nation is intimately connected with the conduct of each individual in it, and that the spirit of self-regard and of personal responsibility, are bound up with the true spirit of patriotism, and therefore if the latter be wanting, or if it be neglected, trifled with, or abused, collectively or individually, we must suffer from it. It was this true patriotism, and the feeling of individual responsibility which led the departed to propose, at the beginning of the rebellion, that the amount of \$100,000 should be raised to arm and equip volunteers for the service. No provision had then been made by the State of New Jersey, and as an individual he felt that something must be done. He himself subscribed liberally, and urged others to subscribe of their abundance. The money, however, was not needed, as the State soon after made bountiful provision for the service. But so deeply interested was he that he personally visited Washington, and urged upon the Government decided, vigorous measures. Prompt in action, he was always found doing his best for his country in her hour of peril. He knew the value of one country, undivided and united; whose boundaries the Atlantic and Pacific alone can define, now and forever, one and inseparable. He knew no North nor South, East or West. Yes, "In this he being dead, yet speaketh."

But in the next place, J. A. Roebling was especially distinguished for his benevolence—his sympathy for the suffering and afflicted. He was not content with idle wishes, fruitless theories, abortive projects for the well-being of his fellow

men. He not only thought but acted. He not only professed good will but rendered service. He felt that all his qualifications, physical, mental, spiritual, circumstantial, were not to be limited to self but were given for the good of others. For this he labored and for this he lived.

True goodness of heart will always manifest itself in this abnegation of self. It is the first principle in Christian morals, that no man liveth to himself.

He whose course on earth affords the grand model of holy living, to all his disciples to the end of time, while on earth was as one that serveth. He tells us in so many words, that he came not to be ministered unto but to minister; that is to serve, to wait upon others, for their comfort and salvation. And if we would imitate our Divine Master; if we would live a true life, a life redolent with blessings to others, we must, in this respect, be like our Divine Master. And in this respect, he whose memory is so dear to us all, is a bright example. Like David, "he served his own generation." The life he lived was a blessing to the men of his own time. He acquired a familiarity with the wants and woes of the men and women around him, and it was his delight to supply and alleviate them. Where there was want he strove to supply it; where there was ignorance, he strove to dispel it; where there was sorrow, he strove to soothe it; where there was suffering, he strove to alleviate it; where there was guilt, he was pitiful and tender, if by any means the wrong doer might be reclaimed. How often in the midst of business matters, or in deep study, was he



interrupted by the calls of charity, those who knew him best alone can say. And yet these frequent calls never disturbed him, never caused him to shut his door against the face of any poor man. His request personally to me was to call upon him at any time, when the needy, sick and especially the soldier required assistance. I need not add that I ever found him ready to listen and to aid. And as in my daily walks I pass some house where his bounty has been bestowed, or think of those whose last hours have been soothed by his benefactions, I cannot but exclaim, "Blessed be the man who provideth for the sick and needy; the Lord shall deliver him in the time of trouble." On the very day of his funeral in this place, a soldier of his country and of the Lord Jesus Christ passed to his rest, whose comfort was ministered unto by our departed friend.

And in this respect his example is worthy of imitation by those possessing wealth. He being dead yet speaketh to the living. And I ask, Do we possess the lively interest we ought to have in the men and women of our time? Divested as they may be of that enchantment, which to many, hangs about the unknown and the remote, can we yet persistently labor for them? Oh, think how soon the opportunity of helping them will have slipped away from us. Our own generation—how rapidly is it passing away! In a very little while we, as members of it, will have disappeared. The graves are ready for us; every moment is precious; then, every call is worthy of our attention; every fellow creature we know and can influence for good we

should feel bound to serve to the utmost of our ability. This is our work; here is our sphere. Now, in the fleeting present, is our only time—our fitting opportunity.

But, I notice, in the next place, that in J. A. Roebling the working man had a true friend. I need no labored argument to prove this; the multitudes of working men who, for hours poured into the chamber of death, to take one last look at the familiar features of him whom they knew to be their friend, proved this. There were saddened countenances, and flowing tears coursing down the cheeks of men who seldom weep. Capital and labor are struggling for the conquest, chiefly because there is not that co-operation and hearty sympathy existing between the two. Capital is not the poor man's enemy, but, rightly used, his best friend. We have a noble illustration of this in the history of the departed. By his genius and commanding intellect he opened up a new and extended field of enterprise and blessing to his fellow man. Impassable rivers and mighty chasms are bridged; employment is given to thousands in a new field of industry; large capital has been invested, and employment is given to the working man. We can readily see what a benefit has been conferred by this new branch of industry. Not only have the operatives been well paid, but the means have also been furnished for enlarged gifts to the sick and suffering. I know from a conversation with the deceased a few weeks before his death, how dear to his heart the interests of the working men were. His prominent thought then

was: Educate the working man; give his children the best schools in the country; then we shall have intelligent labor, inventive genius, and strikes, the bane of the working man, will be at an end. And in this connection he was desirous of having reading rooms opened in this city, and doubtless if he had been spared would have provided them. In all my ministrations in this vicinity, I never yet heard a working man say aught against the deceased. No, "none knew him but to love him; none named him but to praise."

But I must pass on; and I think it will be no violation of confidence if I mention, as illustrating the religious views of the deceased, the subject matter of a conversation, some weeks after receiving the injury resulting in his death. A deep thinker on all subjects, the deceased had formed high and exalted ideas of the paternal character of God. He saw His guiding power in the winds and waves; in the mighty fields around us; and also recognized God's hand in the molecular arrangement of the crystal or the movement of the floating atom. He believed in no doctrine of blind chance, but in all events, even the most trying and afflictive, recognized a merciful Father's direction and care. I well remember, when speaking of the injury that it then was thought would confine him to his chamber but for a few weeks, I remarked: "It seems a strange accident, that at the beginning of so great a work you should be laid up for two or three months." He replied: "There is no such thing as chance; all is wisely ordered." I then recalled to mind a conversation held two or three months before, when

the deceased stated that he felt stronger in spirit and soul then, although his body might have passed its prime. "Yes," he replied, "this body may be torn limb from limb, but the soul cannot be injured; it shall live for ever. Matter and spirit are both from God. All the multitude of animal tribes around us, which fill the earth, air and sea, were created out of nothingness by the word of the Almighty; and so, also, the bodily part of man; but it was not so with the soul. God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life. The body was of His will; the life was of Himself—life of life. Faint images of Himself were stamped like incomplete creations upon the animal world around him—images of reason—likenesses of the living spirit that was in Him. There are lessons to man even in the brute creation around; but in man only have we the immortal, living principle that shall live on for ever and gloriously expand." Such, in brief, is a very imperfect relation of some of the views of the departed, and these views are theologically correct. As soon as the soul leaves this clay tenement, there bursts upon it a scene of infinite greatness. Through the low portals of the grave it does pass into the life infinite. The limits of time, and the fetters of space, and the temporary clog that keeps us down, are all gone. In that world all is joy and life. In that world there is no ceasing to be; the separate consciousness is not swallowed up into universal being as the rain-drop is swallowed up by the ocean.

Such thoughts as these filled my mind as I gazed upon the great and good, reposing so peacefully in the coffin. And, more than this, I thought not of



the beauty and comeliness of him that was gone : These have faded, oh ! how soon. I thought not of his riches : these are left behind ; they were used but for the benefit of others. I thought not of his acquirements, of his genius, of his fame. But I thought of what he was in his inner nature, because that is the index of what he is now. For, if here the departed was true, noble, pure, brave, loving and tender, how must each one of these flowers of heaven have expanded in that their truest country ? Yes, for the departed life is over with its toils, and cares, and perplexities ; the calm is won--the infinite, unbroken calm. He rests from his labors, and his works do follow him. Such a man as John A. Roebling always leaves works ; sometimes openly evident which every eye can read. I refer not now so much to those monuments of his fame, Niagara, Wheeling, Cincinnati, &c., &c. ; I refer especially to his labors for the good of his fellow men ; his efforts to redress evils, maintain truth, establish justice, relieve the oppressed.

And can such a man have lived in vain ? Think you his life has been purposeless ? Oh, no, my friends, every high principle of the life of such a man lives, repeats itself again, lays hold upon some other heart, raises up another to tread in his steps. Every work of love that he has wrought is lifted high above our eyes. While the man lives, the imperfections of his nature in some degree dim it ; but it is lifted up when he is taken from us, and a thousand hearts, in the midst of their struggles, are encouraged to persevere, to be loving, true, tender, kind and benevolent.

And this life is in each one before me. There may be differences of position, of intellect, of ability; but every one can be true, kind, benevolent. God did not breathe into your nostrils the breath of life that you might grovel, mole-like in the dust of the earth, living for self alone; but for higher, holier and nobler purposes. Oh! ye rich men, listen to the whispering voice that rises from the grave; relieve the distressed, the widow and the orphan; listen to the sorrowful tale of the poor man, and for you shall ascend the prayers of the widow, the outcast, and the oppressed, and your dying moments will have no sad thoughts of opportunities of usefulness neglected, and wealth misspent.

But time admonishes me that I must close this imperfect tribute of respect to the memory of the great and good. But one thought presents itself on which I will dwell for a moment, and it is this. The time of departure to each one from earth is definitely fixed. It is not an affair of chance. It is not left to the will of men. It is not dependent upon the progress or retardment of disease. It is ordered of God. Doubtless, there is much of truth, then, in the statement that "each of us is immortal till his work is done." Now, this thought may serve to correct an error into which we very commonly fall, with regard to the death of men eminently great or useful. We too often speak of such an event as untimely or as premature; but it can only be so from our point of view—not certainly from God's. We do not read the secret processes going on in each other's minds, and, therefore, we often know nothing of the mellowing and ripening for heaven, which is

progressing in the soul. We do not know what particular measure of work and responsibility has been devolved upon each, and we are, therefore, incompetent to state when the one has been completed and the other fulfilled. This we know, however, that there is a separate award for each in the future; and we may therefore, rejoice in the belief that God does not take any home till His grace has fully fitted them for their coronation glories and high immortal happiness in His presence. Besides, when we speak of the death of the good as, in any case, premature, we seem to forget that God has other worlds than this, and other spheres of service. May not those who are taken from us so mysteriously, apparently before their time, be needed in the court above for employment and offices, whose importance and dignity surpasses all that imagination can conceive of? Sure, I am, that wherever heaven may be, it has its own arrangement for sacred service and occupation. The soul does not sleep, but goes on expanding in the realms of upper day.

But I must close. The noble, true, loving and tender spirit has been removed from the scenes of his earthly labor. No monument of towering marble chiselled by the sculptor's skill is needed to record his memory or his fame. The proud memorial of his genius will stretch from the metropolis of our country to her sister city on the adjacent shore. It will rise, stone by stone, step by step, under the loving direction of sons, happy thus to honor their beloved parent. Its every detail already marked out by the deceased and approved

by the best scientific men of our country. And when the "toilers of the sea," and the stranger shall inquire, as he gazes on the ærial structure, whose the mighty plan that bridged the rapid stream, the name of the departed will be heard. But not only at the entering in of the sea is his name recorded ; it is heard by the mightiest of earth's cataracts, and Niagara's deep, eternal diapason unites with the Æolian sounds that ever whisper, from the lines and chords of the Suspension bridge as they vibrate to the summer breezes. Our own Delaware, too, has witnesses of his skill, and the great West, the waters of the Ohio, and other streams are spanned by his creative genius.

But before I close, I may be permitted to convey, on behalf of those intimately acquainted with the virtues of the deceased, to the bereaved family of the deceased, the expression of our sincerest sympathy under the deep affliction. May He who doeth all things well, bring to their relief the consolations of religion, and the satisfaction of knowing that, as a friend, citizen, patriot, John A. Roebling lives in the hearts of this whole community.

The beauties of his domestic life remain to his family as sacred recollections. It is not for us there to intrude, or by any attempt to pass them in review, or disturb the melancholy but sweet satisfaction the memory of them must necessarily inspire. It is for us to imitate his virtues, his charity, his kindness, his nobleness of aim in life, so that when we go the way of all the earth, the world may be better for our having lived upon it.













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